

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-06 FEAE-00 DODE-00
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FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY
TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7119
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOMBAY 0516

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: IAEA TECH MN UC IR IN
SUBJ: IRAN-INDIA ATOMIC ENERGY COOPERATION AGREEMENT

REF: NEW DELHI 3033 (NOTAL)

1. PRESS ACCOUNTS OF INDO-IRANIAN AGREEMENT ON ATOMIC ENERGY WHICH WAS SIGNED IN BOMBAY ON FEB 25TH ARE VAGUE, GIVING FEW DETAILS BEYOND FACT THAT AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION RELATES TO THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY. THESE REPORTS SIMPLY SAY THAT THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR THE EXCHANGE OF SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AND SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICIANS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IN A WIDE FIELD OF NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES.

2. IN SPEAKING TO NEWSMEN AFTER SIGNING THE ACCORD. DR ETEMAD HEAD OF THE IRANIAN ATOMIC ENERGY ORGANIZATION ADDED LITTLE, NOTING ONLY THAT INDIA HAS FACILITIES FOR TRAINING IRANIAN TECHNICIANS IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD AND THAT "MORE COORDINATED PROGRAMMES WOULD BE CHALKED OUT IN DUE COURSE", TO THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF BOTH COUNTRIES. THE NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS THEN GIVE A FAIRLY DETAILED AND WE BELIEVE ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF IRAN'S
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PLANS FOR NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. WHEN DR ETEMAD WAS QUESTIONED BY THE PRESS ABOUT REPROCESSING, HE REPLIED THAT IT WAS "TOO EARLY TO THINK ABOUT THE PROCESSING OF ATOMIC FUEL AND THE PROBLEM WAS NOT VERY URGENT." HE ADDED THAT IRAN IS A SIGNATORY OF THE NPT AND CONSEQUENTLY THERE MIGHT NOT BE NEW NEED FOR THE SIGNING OF ANY SPECIAL AGREEMENT FOR OBTAINING NUCLEAR FUEL.

3. DURING THE COURSE OF A CONVERSATION WITH IAEC CHAIRMAN SETHNA ON THE EVENING OF FEB 25, THE DAY THE INDO-IRANIAN AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED, THE SUBJECT OF THIS AGREEMENT AROSE WHEN SETHNA REMARKED THAT M.A. VELLODI, MEA SECRETARY, HAD BEEN IN BOMBAY DURING THAT WEEK. THE CONGEN SAID HE ASSUMED THAT THIS WAS IN CONNECTION WITH THE INDO-IRANIAN TALK AND ASKED IF COOPERATION WITH IRAN HAD BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY EXTENDED BY THE VISIT. SETHNA SAID THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN INDIA'S STANCE ON REFUSAL TO EXPORT SENSITIVE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY OR SPECIAL NUCLEAR MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT. HE INDICATED THAT THE ACCORD COVERED ONLY TRAINING FOR IRANIAN TECHNICIANS AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION IN NON-SENSITIVE AREAS. SETHNA HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD CONGEN ON MANY OCCASIONS THAT IRAN IS ONE OF SEVERAL COUNTRIES PRESSING INDIA FOR HELP IN THE NUCLEAR AREA, BUT THAT INDIA WILL NOT EXTEND COOPERATION WITH THESE COUNTRIES INTO SENSITIVE AREAS.

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